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## Thousands without power

**Michael Zennie**

The Journal Gazette

As of 2 p.m. Thursday, Indiana Michigan Power reported the following outages in northeast Indiana:

Adams County, 521 customers.

Allen County, 878 customers.

Noble County, 229 customers.

Wells County, 127 customers.

The Indiana Department of Homeland Security Emergency Operations Center reported Thursday afternoon that there had been no requests for its help.

It said power outages, flooded roadways, downed trees and power lines, wind-related accidents and damage to structures have been reported across the state.

At the peak of the power outage, 140,777 customers in Indiana were without power. There are now 24,322 customers without power, it said.

The center said it continues to monitor rivers statewide for potential flooding.

I&M spokesman Mike Brian said all outages should be restored by midnight.

Strong winds, which peaked about 11 p.m. Wednesday at 40 mph with 56 mph gusts, knocked down trees and limbs, bringing lines down with them throughout the region.

Crews have repaired all major circuits, Brian said Thursday morning. They are now going house-to-house in darkened neighborhoods as they work to fix the remaining outages, which are widespread.

About 2,100 customers in Allen County were still in the dark by 8 a.m. Thursday, down from a high of more than 5,100.

Outages weren't the only trouble caused by the windy weather.

The National Weather Service reported that more than 4 inches of rain fell Wednesday in Decatur in Adams County. More than 2 1/2 inches of rain fell in Ossian in Wells County.

Rainfall at the Indianapolis International Airport totaled 1.87 inches, a new record for the day.

Delaware County Emergency Management Director William Gosnell blamed a small tornado for damage near Muncie, where the roof was ripped off a barn and a nearby home's roof was damaged. No injuries were reported.

The National Weather Service was unable to confirm a tornado. Meteorologist Ashley Brooks said the agency hadn't ruled out a tornado, but had yet to review the evidence.

A vacant mobile home was blown onto a road about five miles from Lafayette, but no one was hurt, a Tippecanoe County sheriff's dispatcher said.

The National Weather Service reported a 66 mph wind gust in Shelbyville, southeast of Indianapolis.

Duke Energy reported more than 32,000 outages Wednesday night, with more than 7,000 of those in southern Indiana's Clark County. About 9,600 outages remained early Thursday.

Duke spokeswoman Angeline Protogere said the bulk of the outages were caused by wind knocking branches into power lines or tearing down the lines.

About 10,000 Vectren customers in southwestern Indiana were without power Wednesday afternoon, said spokeswoman Chase Kelley, and about 3,000 outages remained later that night.

Scattered outages also were reported in Indianapolis, and more than 2,000 outages were reported in suburban Hamilton County.

*The Associated Press contributed to this story.*

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## **Share your storm story**

Is your neighborhood flooded? What are you doing to cope with the power outage? Has a neighbor come to your aid?

If you would like to share your story, please send it to [jgnews@jg.net](mailto:jgnews@jg.net) and put "Storm" in the subject line. To report breaking news, please call The Journal Gazette 24/7 tip line at 615-4642

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Article published Jan 30, 2009

## **Detectors pick up fires differently**

### **Those at complex work best in very hot fires, heavy smoke**

A week ago today, while a building at the Willows of Coventry apartments still was smoldering hours after it caught fire, two displaced residents told how they awoke that morning not to the sound of a smoke alarm, but to a roommate's coughing from the heavy smoke in their apartment.

That could be true, based on the type of smoke detectors inside the Willows buildings.

The Willows have ionization detectors installed in apartments, according to Douglas S. Hastings, a spokesman for DEI Communities, the Omaha, Neb.-based company that runs the apartments. Ionization smoke detectors are the most common fire detector on the market, with several news sources stating that 93 percent of U.S. homes have ionization detectors. This is primarily because they are the least expensive at \$5 to \$10.

Basically, if a fire begins in an adjoining room - or apartment, in this case - an ionization smoke detector likely would not pick up that type of high-temperature smoke. In most cases, it will take nearly filling a room with smoke before the alarm would sound. This unit is designed to detect the smoke from hot fires with large flames.

In this type of detector, the radiation from smoke will pass through a space filled with air that lies between two electrodes, called an ionization chamber. The chamber contains a tiny and constant current that flows between the two electrodes. When smoke enters the chamber, the smoke dilutes the device's ionization and, thus, disturbs that current, triggering an alarm, according to [www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com).

In the Willows fire, photoelectric detectors might have been more effective.

Photoelectric detectors sense light, or lack thereof. The detector is made up of an incandescent bulb or infrared LED, a lens that collimates light into a beam and an angled sensor that detects that light, according to [www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com).

In a clear room, light will freely pass in front of that detector. In a smoke-filled room, however, that beam picks up the smoke and becomes scattered, sending frayed beams to the sensor and triggering an alarm, the site said.

Photoelectric detectors, which typically cost between \$10 and \$15, are best at detecting the smoke from cooler, smoldering fires that produce more smoke than flames initially.

However, officials have said that one detector is no better than the other, and neither the Fort Wayne Fire Department nor Indiana State Fire Marshall James L. Greeson suggested one over the other. They are specialized units and designed to detect specific smokes from specific fires.

The Fort Wayne Fire Department did say after the fire was cleared that alarms in the building were working properly.

The best bet with fire and smoke detectors is a dual-sensor, the most effective smoke detector because it combines the technology of both photoelectric and ionization detectors, Greeson said.

Dual-sensor alarms are more expensive, costing between \$25 and \$30 on average.

“It's somewhat more expensive, but to be safe and sure, if someone wanted to have a combination of an ionization and a photoelectric, that probably would be the best to go with, if you can afford those,” said Greeson.

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## Terre Haute firefighters recognized for service

**By Brian M. Boyce**  
The Tribune-Star

TERRE HAUTE January 20, 2009 10:55 pm

— For more than two centuries, American firefighters have answered the call of duty be it with bucket brigades, steam engines or computers.

And according to Indiana State Fire Marshal James Greeson, the one thing that hasn't changed is the people.

"The dedication I witnessed during those flood periods by the fire departments and law enforcement was remarkable," he said during his speech Tuesday evening in reference to the statewide floods this past June.

Greeson served as guest speaker for the Terre Haute Fire Department Commendation Awards banquet sponsored by First Financial Bank in Indiana State University's Student Union's Dede I and II.

Beginning his work in fire service at the Indianapolis Fire Department in 1970, Greeson retired from that department before accepting his new position with the state last year.

But the history of fire departments extends back 230 years, he said, noting its origins with Founding Father Benjamin Franklin.

From bucket brigades all the way to modern 911 systems, Greeson recalled his own early experiences at the Indianapolis department, mentored by World War II veterans, members of what he and others have termed "the greatest generation."

Fire Chief Jeff Fisher saluted the Terre Haute department, "I toast you," he said, raising his glass. "To the best fire department in the state."

Fisher noted in his speech that he hoped to "not top that this year," in reference to a dorm fire at ISU on the 2008 awards night, which cut the ceremonies short.

Fisher reiterated other memorable moments from 2008, his first year as chief, citing the department's taking over of fire protection at Terre Haute International Airport-Hulman Field, the June floods, the fire at presidential candidate Hillary Clinton's Terre Haute headquarters, the visit by President Bill Clinton, visits by then-Sen. Barack Obama and a fire at International Paper.

"This is not just an award," he said of Tuesday evening's presentation winners. "It's recognition by your fellow firefighters, your brothers and sisters."

Mayor Duke Bennett also noted the "blessing" of attending the dinner that concludes his first year in office.

Bennett mentioned his personal experience with the department as his own home caught fire earlier in the year, joking that one of the firefighters asked if he was going to show up at all the fires to check up on them.

“We’re very proud of you,” he said.

*Brian Boyce can be reached at (812) 231-4253 or [brian.boyce@tribstar.com](mailto:brian.boyce@tribstar.com).*

**And the winners are ...**

- Firefighter of the Year: firefighter Michael Likens
- EMT of the Year: firefighter/paramedic Kevin Price
- Civilian Service Awards presented to: Darrell Summerlot, Brendan Kearns, Kristy VanSickle, Holden Smith, Mike Burn, Terre Haute Police Department Sgt. Harold Seifers and Lafayette baseball team members Michael Myers, Brandon Alford, Emilio Domondon, Kory Banes, Corey Aldridge and Andrew West.
- Paramedic Certification Award: firefighter Gregg Lawson
- Education Award: firefighter Jeff Mason
- The Life Saving Medal: firefighter Alan Moore
- Unit Citation Medal: Capts. Sam Lane and Bill Berry; Lts. Jeff Monroe and Joe Swan; firefighters Drew Phelps and Gregg Lawson.
- Fire Chief's Exceptional Service Award: EMS Chief Leroy Stewart
- Honorable Service Medal: Lts. Joe Swan and Jay Umbaugh, and firefighters Don Osborne, Ron Terrell, Brock Marietta and Richard Gallagher
- Meritorious Service Medal: firefighter Kenneth Ladd
- The Samaritan Medal: firefighters Larry Akers and Robert Johnson Jr.
- Honorable Discharge Medal for retiring with a minimum of 20 years of service: Capt. Stan Capobianco and firefighters Steve Johnson and Russell Mitchell

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## Hammond teen dies in apartment fire

BY

[dhinkel@nwitimes.com](mailto:dhinkel@nwitimes.com)

DAN

HINKEL

219.933.4183 | Sunday, February 15, 2009

HAMMOND | A 14-year-old girl died in an apartment fire that also severely hurt the girl's mother and brother early Saturday morning in Hammond's Hessville neighborhood.

Elizabeth A. Schnyder, a Scott Middle School student, was pronounced dead of burns and smoke inhalation at 2:20 a.m. after the fire at the Greenbriar Apartments in the 3500 block of 173rd Street, said a spokeswoman for the Lake County coroner's office. Schnyder died at the scene.

The girl's mother and brother were flown by helicopter to a Chicago-area hospital, Hammond Chief Fire Inspector Kevin Margraf said. The mother suffered smoke inhalation, Margraf said. The brother suffered burns and smoke inhalation injuries, Margraf said. No information on their conditions was available Saturday. A Cook County medical examiner's office investigator said his office was not alerted to any fire-related deaths Saturday.

A fourth person, the mother's boyfriend, suffered wounds that weren't life-threatening, Margraf said.

The apartment was engulfed in flames when firefighters were called at 12:49 a.m., Margraf said.

"Flames were already coming out of two different areas of the apartment," he said.

The fire was contained and extinguished before it could spread through the building, Margraf said.

Investigators believe the fire started in the girl's bedroom, but a cause will not be determined until an autopsy is done on the girl's body, said Jeff Roseboom, an investigator for the Indiana State Fire Marshal's Office. Investigators do not believe the fire was intentionally set, he said. Residents said they didn't recall hearing smoke alarms during the fire, but the investigation hasn't determined whether the alarms worked, Roseboom said.

The apartments were "definitely" outfitted with smoke alarms, said Paul Porter, the complex's painter and groundskeeper.

Porter said he often saw Schnyder playing outside the apartments. He described the family as "really nice."

The acrid scent lingered in the air Saturday afternoon near Schnyder's corner apartment, which stands steps from Scott Middle School. Charred blankets and clothes sat in a pile beneath a boarded window. Gas and electricity were cut off to the damaged building, and residents stayed at a hotel Saturday, Porter said.

Times staff writer Bill Dolan contributed to this report.

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## S. Indiana man dies in fire after saving children

JEFFERSONVILLE, Ind. (AP) - A 27-year-old man dropped his two young children to safety from a second-story window of their burning apartment, but didn't jump himself and was killed in the fire.

Michael Dickerson dropped the children - about 6 months and 5 or 6 years old - to a person waiting below as the fire burned about 8 a.m. Friday, authorities said.

Jeffersonville Fire Marshal Mike McCutcheon said the children suffered from smoke inhalation and might have been hurt in their fall, although their injuries did not appear life threatening.

McCutcheon said neighbors in the Gardenside Terrace Townhomes complex tried to convince Dickerson to jump after he dropped the children from the window, but for unknown reasons he did not.

Firefighters found Dickerson in a second-floor bedroom near the window and administered CPR. He was pronounced dead at a hospital.

Jerry Tomes, who lives in a nearby apartment, said the fire happened as neighborhood children were heading to school in the city just north of Louisville, Ky.

"The kids were out here screaming," Tomes said. "I came out and they were dropping the kids out the window."

Tomes said Dickerson "was screaming, but he just couldn't get out."

The cause of the fire was not immediately known.

McCutcheon said the children's mother was on a trip to the store when the fire began, while Dickerson was upstairs with the children and another man was asleep on a couch in the first-floor living room.

Dickerson and the other man tried without success to put out the fire, then Dickerson went back upstairs and the man went out the front door, McCutcheon said.

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